

Now, our community colleges are faced with a myriad of new challenges as they enter their second century.

On February 20, 2001, the United States Postal Service will issue and unveil a post card in honor of the 100th anniversary of JJC and to also honor all of America's Community Colleges. It is my hope that this post card will reaffirm to the American public the value of a good education and will remind us here in Joliet how lucky we are to have JJC in our backyard.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this body to identify and recognize other institutions in their own districts whose actions have so greatly benefited and strengthened America's communities.

H.R. 599: MEDICARE MENTAL ILLNESS NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I introduced H.R. 599, the Medicare Mental Illness Non-Discrimination Act. In reference to my extension of remarks concerning this legislation (on page E156 of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD), I ask that a letter in support of H.R. 599 from Dr. Daniel B. Borenstein, President of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), be added in the RECORD. I submit the following letter from the APA into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, February 8, 2001.
Representative MARGE ROUKEMA,
Rayburn Building, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE ROUKEMA: On behalf of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the medical specialty representing more than 40,000 psychiatric physicians nationwide, I am writing to offer our heartfelt thanks for your sponsorship of legislation to end Medicare's historic discrimination against patients with mental illness.

As you know, Medicare currently requires patients seeking outpatient treatment for mental illness to pay 50 percent of their care out of pocket, as opposed to the 20 percent copayment charged for all other Medicare Part B services. This is simply a policy of discrimination by diagnosis that inflicts a heavy toll on Medicare patients who, for no fault of their own, happen to suffer from mental illness.

Your legislation would end this discrimination by requiring that Medicare patients pay only the same 20 percent copayment for mental illness treatment that they would pay when seeking any other medical treatment, including, for example, treatment for diabetes, cancer, heart disease, or the common cold. APA commends you for your continued dedication to persons with mental illness, and we join you in urging Congress to end Medicare's discriminatory coverage of mental illness treatment.

Thank you for your sponsorship of this most important bill. We look forward to working with you to secure its ultimate enactment.

Sincerely,

DANIEL B. BORENSTEIN, M.D.,
President.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO STRENGTHEN AND IMPROVE THE BENEFITS PROVIDED TO SMALL BUSINESSES UNDER INTERNAL REVENUE CODE SECTION 179

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the "Small Business Expensing Improvement Act of 2001," legislation to assist small businesses with the cost of new business investment. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by my colleague on the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. TANNER.

Small businesses truly are the backbone of our economy, representing more than half of all jobs and economic output. We should not take small business vitality for granted, however. Rather, our tax laws should support small businesses in their role as the engines of innovation, growth, and job creation.

The legislation we are introducing today will improve our tax laws to make it easier for small businesses to make the crucial investments in new equipment necessary for continued prosperity. Under Code Section 179, a small business is allowed to expense the first \$24,000 in new business investment in a year. Our legislation will increase this amount to \$35,000, beginning in 2001. Furthermore, our bill will index this amount to ensure that the value of this provision is not eroded over time.

This legislation will also allow more small businesses to take advantage of expensing by increasing from \$200,000 to \$300,000 the total amount a business may invest in a year and qualify for Section 179. It is important to note that this amount has not been adjusted for inflation since its enacting into law in 1986.

The "Small Business Expensing Improvement Act" also improves the small business expensing provision by following the recommendations of the IRS National Taxpayer Advocate in his 2000 Annual Report to Congress. Specifically, our legislation makes residential rental personal property and off-the-shelf computer software eligible for expensing under Section 179.

Mr. Speaker, in times of economic uncertainty, we must do all we can to encourage new investment and job creation. The "Small Business Expensing Improvement Act of 2001" will help accomplish this worthy goal, and I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE DAY OF REMEMBRANCE RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE WARTIME PARITY AND JUSTICE ACT OF 2001

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday I will enjoy the privilege of joining with citizens in Los Angeles at the historic Japanese American National Museum dedicated in its mission to "remembering our history to better guard against the prejudice that threatens liberty and equality in a democratic society," in com-

memorating the Day of Remembrance. Truly by reflecting on our history we secure the promise of the "streets of gold" that our ancestors dreamed about. An America ripe with opportunity for all people—and a spirit refined by our struggles to build a brighter future as we secure the riches of the blessings of liberty.

On Saturday, we will gather to remember a solemn past so we can look onward towards a future of promise. We look back solemnly to a relocation center at Rohwer Arkansas where a young boy was forced to spend much of his childhood. But we see a more promising future as this boy, Los Angeles' very own, George Takei, overcame that experience to become a household name as an original cast member of one of America's most celebrated television programs. We look back solemnly at a relocation center called Heart Mountain in Wyoming where another innocent young boy was stripped of his freedom. But we see a more promising future as this boy, Norman Mineta, became the first Asian Pacific American ever to serve on a presidential cabinet. We look back solemnly as mothers and fathers stood behind barbed wires branded as traitors to the very flag for which their sons fought as valiant soldiers of the 442nd Combat Regiment. They helped secure our freedom even as we robbed that very freedom from their loved ones. But we look to a more promising future as last year President Clinton finally awarded this country's highest military citation, the Medal of Honor, to 22 of these heroes. Those medals are just a dim reflection of the brilliance of their courage and resilience. We can never repay their sacrifice for our nation.

These are the ones who have worked tirelessly to bring us where we are today. But there is still much more work that needs to be done. This year's Day of Remembrance theme behind which we gather, "Building a Stronger Community Through Civil Rights and Redress" is appropriately fitting as we work together towards the America we dream of today. Together we have achieved much but there is still much more left to do. I am proud to continue our struggle for civil rights. Along with the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I worked this last year in Congress to secure needed funding to build a memorial center right outside of Los Angeles at the Manzanar relocation center. My colleagues and I wanted to make sure that the camp stands to remind us never to erect another one again. We must remember our past so we can build a better future. Further, during the 106th Congress we worked in combating the sickness of hate motivated crimes, establishing the first ever Presidential Commission on Asian Pacific Americans, defending bilingual education, enabling minority owned businesses, and fighting against the troubling trend of racial profiling.

This year I followed closely the story which our keynote speaker, Ms. Alberta Lee, will speak about. Indeed, Mr. Wen Ho Lee's case sent shockwaves not only through the Asian Pacific American community but through all of us dedicated to civil rights—and those of us who know our history. Fifty-nine years ago after the tragic bombing of Pearl Harbor an entire group of American's became suspect and victims of racial profiling. The only "evidence" the United States had against them was the color of their skin. Unfortunately that was enough for President Franklin Roosevelt